3D BOX
Photoshop Action

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Supplementary Documentation

Hi,

Welcome and thank you for your investment in **3D Box Photoshop Action**.

This action takes a flat design and turns it into an eye-popping three dimensional box design at the click of a button, without the hassle of going through pages of tutorials!

What You Need

1. You will need to have a flattened version of a design that you would like to turn into a box
2. The box design must have a dimension of 500px by 500px
3. The first 100 pixels wide area from the left must be the side of the box

Instructions of Use

First, you will need to select all the layers that your flat design is composed of and merge it into one single layer. To do this, open the cover design document and press CTRL + SHIFT + E.

Next, you'll need to make sure your design is 500 pixels tall and 500 pixels wide. Go to Image > Image Size… to verify this. At this point, if your design is not 500 x 500 and you want to force it into an 500 by 500px image (which I strongly recommend against), uncheck the Constraint Proportions checkbox and enter 500 pixels into both the width and height textfields.

Select the whole canvas by pressing CTRL + A. Then, copy the design by pressing CTRL + C.

Now, create a new document which is 600 pixels tall and 600 pixels wide. Press CTRL + V to paste the design onto your new document. At this point, make sure the design resides on a layer named "Layer 1", and there are no other layers besides "Layer 1" and "Background".

Select the Move Tool and move your design so that it snaps to the top and left borders of the canvas.

Press Alt + F9 if the Actions Palette is not already on the screen. Then, open the flyout menu on the palette by pressing the little arrow button and choose Load Actions…

Browse to the action file you have just purchased and downloaded (3D Box.atn) and load it. Then, select the "3d box transform" action and press the little play button at the bottom of the palette.

Your design should be automatically transformed into a 3D box design, complete with lighting and shadows!

Creating a Flat Design
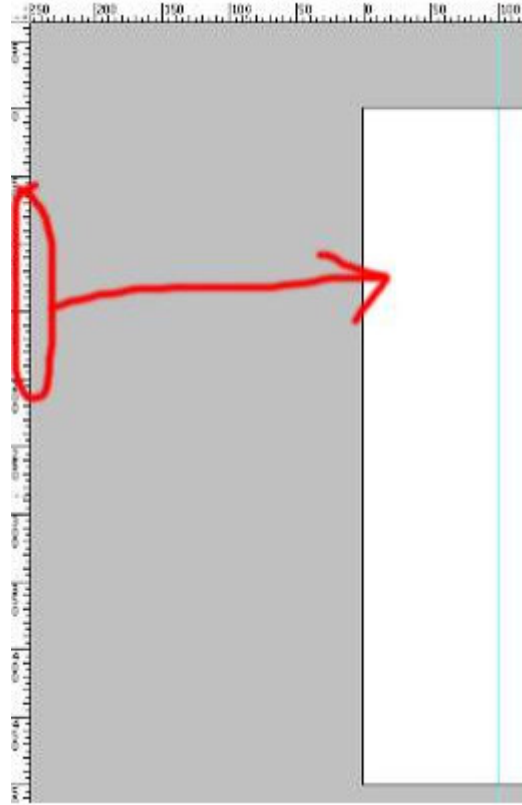
Supplementary Chapter

Since we are going to use the concept of a cardboard box, let's get accustomed to using the "cardboard terminology". We are going to create the flat version of the eBook cover. If you are not sure what I am talking about, grab a cardboard box and pull it apart so that it is a flat cardboard.

First, open your Photoshop program.

We are going to create two sides of the box, the front and the side since only the two sides are viewable in our eBook cover shot, like the one shown right below:

First, create a new document in Photoshop. Go to *File > New* and type in 500 pixels for both width and height. Normally, you'd want to create your "flat cardboard" design at a much greater size than your final 3D cover.

Now, press Control + R to bring out the Ruler if you don't have them on by default just yet. Right click the ruler and choose Pixels as units.
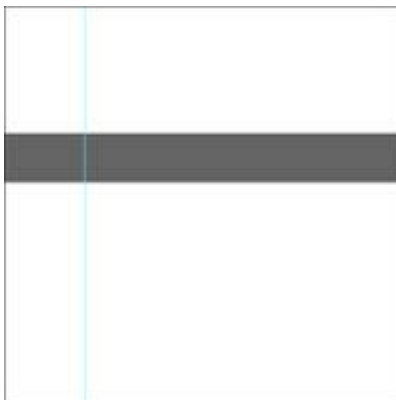
What we want to do is to allocate the 100 pixels wide area from the left to be the "side" of the cover, and the remaining 400 pixels wide area to the right the "front".

First, put your mouse on the vertical Ruler as shown in the screenshot and click it. Then, without releasing the mouse button, drag it towards the right while holding the Shift key.

Once the ruler snaps to the 100 pixel mark on the horizontal Ruler, release the mouse button and the Shift key. Now that we have a clear boundary as to where each region belongs to, let's start creating the cover!

First, create a new layer above your *Background* layer. Then, grab the *Rectangular Marquee Tool* and drag a horizontal bar across the entire canvas, covering both the "*side*" and "*front*" regions. Choose a dark grey color as your *Foreground Color* and fill the selection by pressing ALT + Backspace.

Your canvas should like something like the image here.

Next, add in the title of your eBook in the grey bar and set its color to white to contrast against it. I have also added in a few extra lines using the *Horizontal Type Tool*; these may serve as taglines if you are creating an actual eBook cover.

Notice how I added a smaller version of the book title in the "*side*" region too – this is done to imitate real book covers that often repeat the book title

in smaller printing at the side. You can also add details like the author's name, issue date (for eZines) and so on.

Now, we might say we have a basic cover design done here. A very simple and elegant design with utilitarian charm to it, but we are not stopping here. Or else you'll probably sue me for a refund or something.

But seriously, if you are creating special reports or mini eBooks to be given away, why not create a simple cover, just like this one, to push your conversion? An image like this takes just about five minutes to create and it gives your special report more "tangibility", and hence a potentially greater response from visitors.

Anyway, let's continue with the design.

At this stage, it would be useful to grab a stock photo of something related to your eBook. Let's say yours is a recipe eBook – get a photograph of cooking utensils or steaming delicious food. If your eBook is about Internet marketing, get images of bank notes or computers.
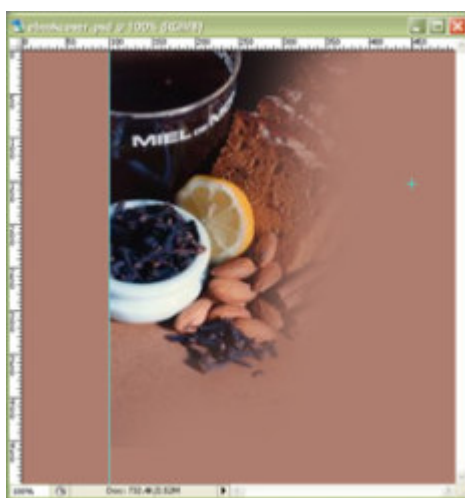
Let's say we are going to create a cover for a recipe eBook.

First, I hopped on to my favorite stock photo site and found this photo which would be perfect for the eBook cover.

Now, load your photograph in Photoshop. The following are the steps that I have chosen to use the photograph to design the cover, it's not compulsory to follow it verbatim as you may have your own ideas for the design.

Anyway, I first aligned the photograph of the edibles to the 100 pixels margin and the top of the document. Note that I have painted the background a similar brown shade.

Then, I added a **Layer Mask** and used a big, soft brush to paint in some black shades in the layer mask of the photograph.

Basically, in a layer mask, painting in black shades will make your layer "transparent" and white shades opaque. Any grey in between is a variation of opacities – the darker the grey, the more transparent. For softer transitions between the picture and the background, you might want to use bigger brush diameters and lower hardness.

Now that we have the basic graphic designed, it is time to add typography. The first step is to add in the title of the book. For this recipe book, I chose a stylish script font that evokes a feeling of class.

For some variation, I used a serif font for the second half of the title.

Note: Script fonts are similar to calligraphy, often with long curly strokes. Serif fonts are fonts with curlies at the end; fonts like Times New Roman are serif fonts.

Keep in mind that your typography has to be large enough because you will have to distort the whole cover later on. If your text is too small, the text will be pixilated when you distort the cover.

Then, I added the same title to the side portion of the cover. Just copy the two title text layers and rotate them 90 degrees clockwise.

At this point, it is advisable to save the cover image as a .psd file so that you can always come back and correct any mistakes or make any changes.

Please heed my advice as I have been there before. It is really terrible to have to redo everything from scratch just to change a single sentence on your eBook cover.

Alright, now take your flat design and turn it into an eye popping 3D design using the action you have just purchased!